

CLAIMS

1. A service class control system comprising a service class control device and a plurality of terminal devices connected to the service class control device:

 said service class control device comprising:

 means for storing, for each terminal device, service class data indicative of the range of service served by the terminal device; and

10 means for specifying, on the basis of the identification data and service class data , the range of service which the terminal device can serve and transmitting data indicative of the specified range of service to the terminal device, in response to a signal
15 carrying identification data for identifying the terminal device and a request for a start of providing one or more services, when the identification data transmitted from the terminal device is received at the service class control device and the terminal device
20 requests the start of providing one or more services;
and

 the terminal device comprising:

 means for transmitting the identification data for identifying the terminal device to the service class control device and requesting a start of providing a service by the terminal device; and

 means for obtaining and storing data indicative of the range of service which the terminal device can serve and providing one or more services lying within the
30 range indicated by the stored data, when the data

indicative of the range of service transmitted from the service class control device is received at the terminal device.

- 5 2. A service class control device comprising:
means for storing, for each external terminal device, service class data indicative of the range of service served by the terminal device, said external terminal device performing predetermined processing so
10 as to provide one or more services to a user; and
means for specifying, on the basis of the identification data and service class data , the range of service which the terminal device can serve and transmitting data indicative of the specified range of
15 service to the terminal device, in response to a signal carrying identification data for identifying the terminal device and a request for a start of providing one or more services, when the identification data transmitted from the terminal device is received at the
20 service class control device and the terminal device requests the start of providing one or more services.

- 25 3. A terminal device which provides one or more services to a user by executing predetermined processing,
comprising:

means for transmitting, to an external device, identification data which identifies the terminal device and for requiring a start of providing the service; and
means for obtaining and storing the data
30 indicative of the range of service which the terminal

device can serve and for providing the service the range indicated by the stored data, when the data indicative of the range of service transmitted from the external device is received at the terminal device.

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4. A service class control method for controlling the range of service provided by each external terminal device which provides one or more services to a user by executing predetermined processing, comprising the steps

10 of:

storing, for each terminal device, service class data indicative of the range of service served by the terminal device; and

specifying, on the basis of the identification data and service class data, the range of service which the terminal device can serve and transmitting data indicative of the specified range of service to the terminal device, in response to a signal carrying identification data for identifying the terminal device
15 and a request for a start of providing one or more services, when the identification data transmitted from the terminal device is received at the service class control device and the terminal device requests the start of providing one or more services.
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5. A service class control method for controlling the range of service served by a terminal device in the terminal device which performs predetermined processing so as to provide one or more services to a user,
30 characterized by including:

transmitting identification data for identifying the terminal device to an external device and requesting a start of providing the service; and

5 obtaining and storing data indicative of the range of service which the terminal device can serve and providing one or more services lying within the range indicated by the stored data, when the data indicative of the range of service transmitted from the external device is received at the terminal device.

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6. A program for causing a computer to operate as a service class control device, the service class control device comprising:

15 means for storing, for each external terminal device, service class data indicative of the range of service served by the terminal device, said external terminal device performing predetermined processing so as to provide one or more services to a user; and

means for specifying, on the basis of the 20 identification data and service class data , the range of service which the terminal device can serve and transmitting data indicative of the specified range of service to the terminal device, in response to a signal carrying identification data for identifying the 25 terminal device and a request for a start of providing one or more services, when the identification data transmitted from the terminal device is received at the service class control device and the terminal device requests the start of providing one or more services.

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7. A program for causing a computer to operate as a terminal device which provides one or more services to a user by executing predetermined processing, the terminal device comprising:

5 means for transmitting, to an external device, identification data which identifies the terminal device and for requiring a start of providing the service; and
means for obtaining and storing the data indicative of the range of service which the terminal
10 device can serve and for providing the service lying within the range indicated by the stored data, when the data indicative of the range of service transmitted from the external device is received at the terminal device.